

EAT WELL FOR LESS FROM THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROUP



Nutritional Value

All ages need four servings daily from the fruit and vegetable group which contributes minerals and Vitamins A and C. Vitamin A is needed for healthy gums and body tissues, for growth, for normal vision and other conditions of the skin and other body surfaces. A source rich in Vitamin A, such as dark-green and deep-yellow vegetables and fruits should be eaten every other day. Vitamin C is needed every day for healthy gums and body tissues. A source high in Vitamin C such as citrus or dark-green leafy vegetables should be eaten daily.

Buying Tips

Compare costs for the different forms of fruits and vegetables which have about the same food value and the same use in meals. Consider the number of servings possible from a certain amount of the different foods and see which is the most economical; for example, dark-green leafy vegetables such as spinach and collards are much alike in food value and are good nutritional buys. Some greens, however, cost less per serving. Usually, fresh produce is cheaper when in season. So buy frozen, dried or canned varieties when these are not in season or are cheaper to buy than fresh produce.

When buying frozen fruits and vegetables check the package to insure it has not been opened. Consider the grade or quality for the in-

Mary K. Sweeten*

tended use, and buy no more than can be used at once or stored. Less perfect varieties of frozen or canned fruits and vegetables, such as Grade B mixed vegetables and mixed fruits can be successfully used in casseroles or salad mixtures and are just as nutritious. Pie fruit, water packed or packed in syrup, works well for desserts or salads. Leftover vegetables can be frozen for use in soups or stews.

Storage

Wash, trim and store fresh vegetables and fruits in plastic bags in the hydrator of the refrigerator. Berries can be refrigerated without washing or handling until just before serving. Store bananas at room temperature until ripened and flecked with brown. The usefulness of ripe bananas may be extended for several days by placing them in the refrigerator in plastic bags in the hydrator although skins may darken. Store potatoes, onions, winter squash, cushaw and pumpkins in cool, dark, dry ventilated places, but not in the refrigerator.

Store canned fruits and vegetables in dark, dry and cool places. After canned food is opened, store unused portions in the can in the refrigerator. Store frozen fruits and vegetables in the freezer or refrigerator freezing compartment at 0° F. until used.

Preparation

Prepare fruits and vegetables to retain their nutritive value and appetite appeal. Cook vegetables for short periods of time until tender in a small amount of liquid to conserve nutrients. Trim leafy vegetables sparingly as the dark green outer leaves are rich in nutrients. When using raw vegetables in salads, add salad dressing at the last minute unless the recipe calls for marinated vegetables.

*Extension foods and nutrition specialist, The Texas A&M University System.

Sliced fruits or vegetables should be covered in water to prevent oxidation of Vitamin C. Juices rich in Vitamin C, such as grapefruit, orange,

tangerine, lemon and tomato, should be covered in the refrigerator to prevent Vitamin C losses. Exposure to heat and air destroys Vitamin C.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROUP RECIPES



Marinated Carrots

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5 cups sliced carrots | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 1 medium onion | $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vinegar |
| 1 can tomato soup | 1 teaspoon pepper |
| 1 small green pepper, optional | 1 teaspoon prepared mustard |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar | 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup salad oil | |

Cook carrots until tender. Drain and cool. Cut onions and peppers in round slices. Mix with the carrots. Mix remaining ingredients well with fork, wire whip or in a blender. Cover carrots with mixture and marinate at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours or overnight. Serves 10.

Wilted Spinach

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds fresh spinach | diced (optional) |
| 6 to 8 green onions, diced | 3 to 4 eggs, hard-cooked, diced |
| 6 radishes, diced | Salt |
| 6 to 8 slices bacon, | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar |
| | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salad dressing |

Wash and drain fresh spinach. Dice onions, radishes and eggs. Place spinach in mixing bowl and add salt, radishes and green onions. Pour vinegar over the vegetable mixture. Fry bacon until crisp. Pour grease over spinach, tossing continually. Add eggs and salad dressing. Mix well. Serves six.

Sautéed Squash

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 medium onion, chopped | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ stick margarine | $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper |
| 2 cups sliced squash, summer or zucchini | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped pimiento (optional) |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon sweet basil | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup diced processed cheese |

Sauté onion and margarine until onion is clear yellow and soft. Add squash and sauté until just tender. Season with basil, salt and pepper. Add cheese and cook until melted. Serves six to eight.

Baked Pears in Butter Sauce

6 fresh pear halves, unpeeled but cored

Butter Sauce:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3 cups boiling water | $\frac{1}{2}$ stick margarine |
| 4 tablespoons flour | 2 teaspoons vanilla |
| 1 cup sugar | |

Arrange pears in baking dish, cut side up. Mix sugar and flour. Add boiling water gradually. Cook until clear. Add butter and vanilla. Pour over pears and bake in moderate oven until tender. Serves 12.

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Sally Springer, Marilyn Haggard and Frances Reasonover, Extension foods and nutrition specialists, and Karen Walker, former Extension foods and nutrition specialist, The Texas A&M University System, in the preparation of this publication.

Educational programs conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic levels, race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, The Texas A&M University System and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended, and June 30, 1914.

50M-4-75, Revised

F&N5